

SNOSHU-NEWS

Annie Shultz was leading the 40 – 44 division into late February, when she broke her ankle the day after Covered Bridge while trail-running. Annie was our “Rookie of the Year” for the ladies in 2004, and the five events she took part in lead to 1st place finishes at each in the 40-44 age division.



Here is her story concerning the injury and what went through her mind.

“...It was nice to hear from Jim that everyone was asking for me at the Covered Bridge race. And I am so bummed that I wasn't able to go, because I still had one race to do, with only 5 races

under my belt. On Sunday, during a trail run, I slipped on the ice running downhill and broke my ankle in 2 places. I am still in denial.....

The first thought in my head, as I lay writhing on the ground, was MOODY SPRINGS! The competitive spirit in me feels totally crushed.

I just had so much fun with this series. It kept me going this winter. I say snowshoer's are a hardy lot, laughing in the face of crazy frigid temps and early race starts (8 am at Northfield!) Now that was a hard race, with nearly everybody looking like they could charge up that hill blindfolded.

I hope to have my cast on by Moody Springs and feeling good enough to hang out. The splint I have now is just till the swelling goes down. Well, take care. And give me some good news that my competition is calling it quits.”

Broken Raggedy Annie

PHOTO CREDITS

Photos of Annie Shultz and George Andrews are courtesy of Brad Herder and the Pittsfield Boys X-Country Team.

Annie was taken early at Curly's Record Run in Pittsfield State Forest. George was captured as he finished Moby Dick at North Pond, Savoy State Forest. Both from are from 2004.

George Andrews began snowshoeing with us in 2003, and in 2004 he finished the final 4-races on our schedule, with a best finish at Moody. Fitting since this is where he started with us. Here is George's story regarding Moby Dick at North Pond.

“...Thanks for the kind thoughts! I was not sure what happened. My left foot went in a hole and the toe of my boot got caught on something, tripping me. I got back up quickly, but I could not run or jog as it was too painful. I could walk briskly, so that is what I did. I estimate there was about a mile left to go. After the race and I got the snowshoes off, it was a bit painful.

By Monday morning, I realized I had more than just a soft tissue injury. The x-rays showed three broken metatarsal bones. I have a removable cast and am in the care of an excellent foot doctor who is interested in getting me moving as quick as possible. My condition got a lot of attention at the Health Plan I belong to. It is very unusual to break the combination of bones that I did. I was asked how I did that and when I told them it generated even more attention! They never heard of snowshoe racing.

That got me the attention of the physical therapist that works with all the athletes at Yale University. He is going to work with me once I have healed more to help me get back in shape.

After this incident, I am convinced that I will give the qualifier a try next year! I won't be able to get rid of the cast until May 11th. It will probably be physical therapy for a while after.

I plan on getting "race ready" as soon as possible. I don't think I will be able to do anything in May, but a part of me wants to go out and do it just because of the challenge! But common sense

will determine what I do. I found a quote sometime ago that describes my outlook on life, "Accept the challenges so that you may feel the exhilaration of victory". The quote comes from General George Patton. I think it is a great way to look at life!”



George Andrews

Based on Best Six Scores, Minimum Four Scores Needed for Age Group Title

10 - 13

Dylan Sutcliffe 95.19

14 - 16

Justin McCarthy 166.74
Miles Appling 98.36 *

20 - 24

Jay Kolodzinski 464.32 Kelly Short 199.99

25 - 29

Ben Nephew 585.64 Steph Nephew 263.46
James Pawlicki 568.70 Larina Riley 226.71
Elijah Barrett 514.39

30 - 34

Leigh Schmitt 585.17 Kelli Lusk 432.74
Paul Low 495.70 Laura Monti 79.18 *
Richard Bolt 338.67

35 - 39

Dave Dunham 557.50 Jacque Schiffer 413.58
Christophe Lanaud 538.52 Bonnie Fachini 238.67
Rob Smith 281.11 Laurel Shortell 198.44

40 - 44

Edward Alibozek 546.51 Dar McCarthy 308.85
Jim Schultz 506.85 Annie Schultz 268.46
Norm Hecker 405.58 Theresa Apple 107.42 *

45 - 49

Shaun Sutcliffe 564.00 Janice Morra 216.42 *
Bob Dion 522.64 Sue Joyner 154.44
Paul Hartwig 411.47 Sally Goade 147.58

50 - 54

Jack Casey 481.65
Mike Lahey 461.92
Peter Lipka 411.66

55 - 59

Bob Worsham 385.80 Carol Kane 337.40
David Boles 385.63 Laura Clark 268.90
Jim Carlson 159.57

60 - 64

John Pelton 450.08
Ed Alibozek, Jr. 439.79
Richard Hunt 214.97

65 - 69

Jack Quinn 178.57
Art Gulliver 53.33 *

70 - 74

Richard Busa 191.20
Andy Keefe 29.36 *

* Denotes Three Finishes

WMAC TENTATIVE SCHEDULE 2005

No Date Yet Woodford, VT
WOODFORD 3.5 Mile

Sunday January 2, 2005 Andover, MA
MERRIMACK RIVER TRAIL 3.3 Miles

Saturday January 8, 2005 Florida, MA
SOUTH POND SHUFFLE 4 Mile

Saturday January 15, 2005 Adams, MA
GREYLOCK GLEN 3.5 Mile

Sunday January 23, 2005 Pittsfield, MA
CURLY's RECORD RUN 4 Miles

Saturday, February 5, 2005 Northfield, MA
NORTHFIELD MTN 7.25km

Sunday, February 6, 2005 Saratoga, NY
SARATOGA WINTERFEST 5km

Saturday, February 12, 2005 Saratoga, NY
CAMP SARATOGA 8km

Saturday, February 19 2005 Hawley, MA
HAWLEY KILN KLASSIC 7 & 4.5 Miles

Saturday, February 26, 2005 Adams, MA
COVERED BRIDGE 3.5 & 8.0 Miles

Saturday, March 5, 2005 Hawley, MA
MOODY SPRINGS 15km & 10km

Sunday, March 13 2005 Lanesboro, MA
MOBY DICK 2.5 & 9 Miles

Also - Richard Bolt is interested in holding an event in the Manchester, NH area for 2005. We will keep you posted.

DION DEMO DAYS/ FUN-RUNS

Early December 2003 in Savoy from North Pond. We have done this Dion Demo Day the last two years and plan on it again. Date will depend on snow and the Woodford Event Date.

The Dion Demo at Windsor Pond in North Adams should be a go also. Date will be announced once we get our Race Schedule set.

Might have an idea for something new, called the HALF Snowshoe Run. Poncho Mach said that he thought the Hoellerich's at Air-Hill Farms would offer up their pastures for snowshoe opportunities. The farm is located in Cheshire, Massachusetts, on the boarder with Adams. The Hoellerich fields connect with Alibozek fields - hence "**HALF**" - **Hoellerich-ALibozek-Farms**. It would be a 3-mile loop through mostly open rolling meadow on groomed snowmobile trail. The route would offer wonderful views and a warm barn to enjoy after.

SNOWSHOE SERIES WRAP – UP - 2004

It was another fine season of snowshoeing, despite the weather trying to upend us occasionally. The snowshoe organizers/directors start getting things together immediately upon the finish of the current season. That means, as you are reading this, over a half dozen people are already working on their events for 2005. Almost all the directors organize more than one event per season. By August, we have our tentative schedule turned into an official one, with applications ready.

This may seem extreme until you think about what organizing an event in winter, on snowshoes, includes. All the effort and time is worth it, as our events function very smoothly despite the occasional weather setbacks. The fantastic turnout at every event really motivates the directors to do their best, and for that we thank you.

When our 2004 schedule was set in August of 2003, we felt that 14 events and 3 Dion Demo Days over 13 weeks wasn't putting us too far out on a limb. I didn't think we would get everything in, but it made some sense to fill the entire winter up with opportunities to snowshoe and accept whatever happened. It just seemed more manageable to have things scheduled, rather than constantly try to juggle events around bad weather days or weeks. We managed 12 races, with only one being without snowshoes (Merrimack), one being shortened (Moody Spring), one turning into another sort of (Moby Dick/ South Pond), and one that never really got off the ground (Hyland Orchard).

In August, Old Farmer Ed became somewhat of a prophet when he started making the statement that "we don't have to have a lot of snow, it just has to stay cold." The bitter cold spell we had from mid January to early February really saved us because we didn't have a ton of snow this year. Additionally, the Old Farmer had some insight to the future concerning South Pond. Throughout the season we kept thinking about holding the Shuffle on an off day, and Old Farmer Ed kept saying "... wait, we may need it for Covered Bridge." Covered Bridge worked out beautifully (barely, the next day most all the snow was shot in the Glen), but by the time of Moody I had the Old Farmer checking conditions at both North Pond and Hawley. He said "there's enough at Moody, we better keep Savoy for an emergency." By the following week, with Moby Dick scheduled, we made the location change. Not only did going to the Savoy location get us on snow, it was among the most perfect snow conditions we had all season long.

We all learned again that it is important for us to remain flexible, and patient. We also learned that without a sense of humor, no one last long at snowshoeing.

We had another incredible season because of so many hard working people made it happen. Thanks to everyone who directed, worked, participated at, wrote about, cooked for, promoted, fitted equipment, donated money towards, or in any other way enjoyed our events. Thank you all very much. The list would go on for pages.

414 different people visited our events for the 2004 season, making up 933 finishers for twelve races. Ben Nephew and Kelli Lusk finished at the very top in the series (best six scores

counting). Ben was especially excited after Covered Bridge, where he kept saying "I finally won a snowshoe race!" If you saw his Barnyard Award votes, you would know how much he enjoyed Covered Bridge. Kelli set new course records at Greylock Glen, Curlys and Hawley Kiln. She also won the title with only five finishes, which shows how dominating she was through the season racing other women. Leigh Schmitt, overall WMAC Snowshoe Champion in 2001 and 2002, finished 2nd 0.47 behind Ben. Jacque Schiffer won two individual races on her way to 2nd overall woman.

Young Farmer Ed

DEJA-VOUS ALL OVER AGAIN!!

First, for those who don't know: A few years ago, for some strange reason, we decided to run the Iditapub twice that winter. The second time, a bunch of us were running in knee deep and waist deep snow on the A.T. in the middle of nowhere. On top of the mountains, several miles from the nearest road or house, we found a Beagle. It was on the verge of death. We were in the middle of a 7-hour run and had to carry the Beagle (Marc Lombard did most of the carrying) to the nearest house. The Beagle survived but a puppy that was lost with it never was found.

Anyway, today the electricity went out and I couldn't get anything done. I decided to go for a run until the power came back on. I went to the Iditapub start area and headed out. I'm not dumb enough to run the Iditapub alone (well, I am, but I didn't). Instead I headed North on the snowmobile trails. After 1-1/2 hours I was in the middle of nowhere (in Woodford). I was about to turn and head back so I stopped and started drinking my Powerade and eating a Powerbar. A few feet away, just off the trail, in some bushes, I saw something move. It was a couple Beagles. They were just lying there, curled up next to each other. The smaller one ran over and started jumping and scratching me, trying to get my food. The other one crawled out of the bushes. It was torn-up and bloody and couldn't stand up. It was limping and falling. It looked like it had been hit by a snowmobile.

I fed them the rest of my food and drink (sound familiar?). I yelled for the owner and looked around for tracks (sound familiar?). Then I picked up the injured one and started back to Route (only a mile or so away), hoping that a snowmobile would come by (and not hit me). Unlike Buddy, this dog was HEAVY! The little one kept running off to look for rabbits or something. When we got to the road I was worried that the little one would get run over. Luckily, about a quarter mile away was a snowmobile tour center. It was open, so I had them call the owner, left the dogs and headed back.

All the way back I felt all warm and fuzzy, but I smelled like a wet dog!

the Dion

2003/2004 WMAC SNOWSHOE SERIES – SOMETHING OF A RECAP

The Races (that I went to)

Date	Location	Dist	Time	Place	Name	Type
12/28/03	Woodford, VT	3.00	0:27:37.0	1st	Woodford Snowshoe	Snow
1/04/04	Andover, MA	3.30	0:20:47.0	7th	Merrimack River Trail	Trail
1/17/04	Adams, MA	3.10	0:27:29.0	7th	Greylock Glen	Snow
1/24/04	Essex Junction, VT	5.80	0:36:32.0	8th	USSSA Qualifier	Snow
1/25/04	Pittsfield, MA	4.00	0:37:19.0	13th	Curly's	Snow
2/01/04	Saratoga Springs, NY	3.11	0:22:33.0	4th	Winterfest	Snow
2/07/04	Northfield, MA	4.50	0:37:53.0	16th	USSSA Regional	Snow
2/14/04	Wilton, NY	4.98	0:36:38.0	5th	Camp Saratoga	Snow
3/20/04	Andover, MA	3.30	0:21:43.0	1st	Merrimack River Trail	Snow

The races have been run, the points have been tallied, spring is here and another year of the ever-expanding WMAC circuit is in the books. This is the second year in a row that my season has been cut short due to injury. After tearing my hamstring for the 2nd time in the last 6 months my Doctor wanted me to take some time off and heal, I wanted to continue running even if it was a minimal amount. He said, "Use pain as your guide and just use your best judgment" if I were to continue running. I told him that using pain as my guide is what got me in trouble, and "my judgment is clouded at best". Hopefully we won't meet up again later this year!

12/21 Savoy, South Pond course with Jim Pawlicki. Nice drive out to South Pond for the Dion Demo day. First time I'd met Jim. I told him my life story on the way out. He told me his on the way back. We went out once clockwise then turned around and ran back against traffic. We really surprised people by going in reverse. The hot stove was a welcome relief after the run.

12/28 Woodford kicked off the racing season with a beautiful day, but a difficult to follow course. I won by virtue of staying on course. Jim completed his first Snowshoe race in what would turn out to be a heck of a string of races. A good turnout by the CMS team but it didn't show in the results. Rich Busa got a good picture of him and Rich Bolt at the finish line.

01/03 Saratoga Biathlon didn't go, but heard that it was short and expensive.

01/04 Merrimack River, snow was missing from the picture but the course was great for a 3.3m XC race. I set up the course as it was getting light and decided that I'd run it even though I left my racing shoes at home (due to a bad spill on black ice earlier in the week that really tweaked my hamstring). Thanks to Team Gloucester who showed up in a couple of carloads we had 20 finishers. Famous Ultra-runner Jim Garcia showed up for the warmdown and helped me and Jim Pawlicki clear the course.

01/10 South Pond was cancelled due to dangerous conditions. I went for a 10m run that morning with Dan Verrington and it was 4 below and windy. I think I would have preferred a snowshoe race.

01/17 Greylock was another interesting 2.5 hour drive (152 miles) with Jim. We caught an excellent view of Greylock from the South summit on the drive in. I accidentally got in the wrong car after warming up! The driver was cool about it. Paul Low and Kelli Lusk showed up for their first snowshoe race of

the season. Jim and I stopped on the way home and checked out the Northfield course. Despite it being a bit tiring it was nice to get out and see how the snow was doing as the area was closed for skiers. It was cool breaking trail on the single track and seeing all kinds of animal tracks in the woods.

01/24 We headed up to Essex Junction, VT for the USSSA qualifier. 3.5 hours driving but it wasn't bad as Jen Rappaport cruised at 80 miles an hour and we all just chatted the entire way. They had nice indoor facilities which came in handy for the below zero temps. Kevin Tilton and Eric Morse had great debuts finishing 2nd and 3rd. I got smoked in the last 2m by 50+ runner Keith Woodward (former Mt Washington Champion). CMS team took 6 out of the top 8.

01/25 I followed up the Vermont race with a drive to Curly's that was another 2.75 hour drive. It was a bad omen when warming up I fell 3 times. I went out very easy due to how lousy I was feeling. As I began to feel better on the climb, I started passing people. I ended up getting as high as 6th place at the top of the climb, but then lost the trail on the big drop. Really pissed at myself for messing this up. I just saw the DVD of the race and it was excellent!

02/01 To Saratoga with Jim 3.25 hours (225m). I got bagged going 84 in a 65. No argument, I was going at least 90 at the time. Felt awful during the race. Jim smoked the course. I got crushed by a teenager who took 2nd and later had a nice chat with his Dad about him going to Nationals. Although I got 4th this was probably my worst race of the year. 5k's are really tough to race, so hard to get into a groove over the short distance. I liked the article in the Saratoga paper in which Jim called me his mentor, reminded me of the Seinfeld episode with the mentor/protégé.

02/07 Race directing and racing are a tough combination, but if you have good workers it is easy to let them do their thing so you can do yours. I got my first ever snowmobile ride as we went over the course, which hadn't been groomed. I went out pretty hard and was surprised at how many guys were in front of me. Dan, always the gentleman, said excuse me as he passed me in the first mile. A big train formed on the climb with 15 of us within a few feet of each other. The downhill was a madhouse. I had bruises on my butt for a week from kicking myself with the shoes. The 75m drive that we did the day before was the shortest drive of the year (excepting the River). A huge group went with me on the warmdown. Best warmdown of the year.

SOMETHING OF A RECAP (continued)

02/14 Another long drive going back to Saratoga, well really Wilton (230m) for a short race. Well any run under an hour is short in my book. Another bruise for me, this time on my Achilles from kicking myself on the narrow trail. Excellent course, great facilities (I took a sink shower that was extremely cold) lots of fun. I was surprised by how many of the CMS gang showed up, as most were not entered. We put 7 in the top 9 but all of us ended up running most of the race alone, very even spacing.

02/21 On to Hawley Kiln, for me back to my roots, where I did my first SS race there in 1999. We drove 2.5 hours (114m) with 5 of us in my little car. We got stuck on the hill with no traction. Dan noted that the 5 of us didn't really add much weight to the vehicle. I watched the race and hung out with Ed in his warm car. It was fun watching people come in and deciding if they were in the short or the long race. Ed seemed to know just about everyone by name! After the race I went on a warmdown with the gang and we checked out the kiln. My hamstring was only 5 days into being torn, but I swear it got better a lot faster after going into the kiln.

02/28 I didn't go to the covered bridges but it sounds like everyone had a good time, another race to look forward to.

03/06 Most of the CMS dudes (and dudettes) were away at the Snowshoe Nationals. Steve Peterson, the course record holder in the shorter Moody course, took on Leigh Schmidt. Leigh won by a couple of minutes over Steve who kept up the honor of CMS with his fine 2nd place showing.

03/07 Nine of us went out to Tahoe to take on the countries best (?). I was sidelined with what was now diagnosed as a torn hamstring. It was perfect weather for running and snowshoeing in a t-shirt. Our guys took 6 out of the top 16 with Paul Low finishing 2nd overall. Our ladies were 1st and 5th, with Nikki Kimball taking the overall champion spot. I took a bunch of pictures and ran around like a lunatic shouting encouragement. We almost got our car towed after I called the Fire chief a bad name (and immediately ran off).

03/13 Moby Dick? I didn't go but hope to make it next year.

03/20 The River part 2. We had 8 inches of snowfall on Wednesday so it looked like a river SS could take place. I set the course up with Rich Bolt and had Dan Verrington do the timing and picture taking. Two other hardcore runners showed up to run. It was a beautiful day in the sun and 40 degree temps and a decent amount of snow to run in. Rich handed me my first victory of the year, by being a gentleman and choosing to sit behind me for the 3.3 miles.

Totals for the season:

Races - 9

Victories - 2

Miles driven - too many to count!

Miles raced - 35.9

Number of T-shirts left over from "The River" - 30

Fun with Friends - Priceless!

Dave Dunham

PROFILE: HAWLEY KILN

The kiln was built in 1870 by a man named Albert Dyer. Mr. Dyer was building the kiln for a man named William O. Bassett, who in 1870 was Hawley's most successful farmer. I don't think at the time that Mr. Dyer thought he was building the most historical site in the Hawley State Forest. The kiln is also the oldest known flagstone charcoal kiln in New England.

The question is "Why was it called the Charcoal Kiln?" The word "kiln" is related to the word kitchen and is, in fact, a large heated chamber or oven made of brick or stone. The purpose of a kiln is to bake or dry wood. This process is called charring. What then is charcoal? Written like char-coal, we understand that wood has been charred to resemble coal. We see this in a fireplace when the wood is not completely burned. Charring takes place when air, particularly oxygen necessary for combustion, is excluded.

The kiln has three dimensions that are easy to remember, 25' high, 25' in diameter, and holds 25 cords of wood. Wood was carried in through the lower door and stacked as high as a man could reach. Loading was completed through a second higher door located on an embankment at the back of the kiln. After the fire was lit, iron doors sealed the openings. Burning was controlled by means of draft holes around the base which were plugged with bricks. Enough oxygen was allowed to keep a low burning fire that would remove the moisture and combustible gases, but not to burn the wood completely. The color of the smoke would indicate if the fire was the right temperature. Yellow smoke meant that the fire was about to burst into flames and needed to be damped down. The fire had to be watched every few hours, day and night, for the two days that it took for the wood to burn.

A tar like substance called creosote, obtained by the distillation of wood tar, blackens the inside walls of the kiln. At the end of two days, the charcoal is so brittle it can easily be broken into small pieces and shoveled out of the kiln. It may then be used in a fireplace, by the blacksmith for his forge or used for smelting or like copper. Charcoal burns with a slow, intense heat so a farmer like Mr. Bassett, who may have had several fireplaces in his house, would like to heat with charcoal instead of wood.

Coal and oil became more available by the end of the century so the life of this kiln as a charcoal producer was a short one, only thirty years. The kiln then became home to pigs and other livestock. In 1957 it was bought by the DEM and was restored to its original condition.

Throughout the years with the help of nature and vandals, the kiln was in desperate need of repair. Funding by the DEM at the urging of the Hawley Historical Commission and the Sons and Daughters of Hawley, work to restore the kiln got underway. Mr. Steve Striebel, a contractor, handled the work. Sonam Lama, a Tibetan stone mason, and Tenzin Norbu, helped with the newly restored kiln in 1993.

Come see this relic from the past first hand each February during the Hawley Kiln Snowshoe Race, in Hawley / Dubuque State Forest.

Information on the kiln provided by: Tom McCrumm

MAD RIVER GLEN BACKCOUNTRY TREK

Having just returned home from Florida and a week of blue sky and warm temperatures on Florida shores, I found an entry form from the Mad River Ski Area for an unusual event called the Backcountry Trek. I nearly pitched the form but I was intrigued by the flyer photo that showed skiers and snowshoers moving along a mountain trail together. The details revealed it was not a race but a very difficult trek using whatever combination of snowshoes and skis you preferred. I was hooked.

Sat AM on March 20 I drove to Fayston, VT for the start. It was a cool, overcast day with intermittent snow. The ski area was filling up fast with downhill skiers. As you stand looking up at Stark Mountain you see a north-south ridge line that rises 2000 feet above the ski base area.

The course started at the mountain base, climbed 2000 feet for about a mile up the north side on a snowshoe trail through a pretty hardwood forest, reaching the snow covered ridgeline and following the famous Long Trail south for about 2 miles. Along the way you pass the tops of three different ski lifts. The lifts are important because they serve as your evacuation route should you be unable to continue. The ridge trail flows beautifully through an evergreen forest and contains many scenic opportunities on a clear day. It was, however, sprinkled with inclines that took considerable strength and finesse to haul one's body up the slippery snow covered slopes. Back at the start we were required to remove one ski or one snowshoe and place it in a pile about 10 yards ahead of the start line. When the start signal was given, you rushed to the pile, recovered your shoe, put it on, and moved out. About this time I was wishing I had replaced my buckle bindings on my Dion snowshoes with the new velcro straps. The shoe recovery procedure tends to spread folks out so there is not a traffic jam at the start of the trail.

When I entered the woods I noticed a middle aged woman standing alongside the trail allowing us to pass. I figured she was waiting for a buddy and did not want to slow us down. As we climbed up through the pretty hardwood forest we passed the top of a ski lift with event monitors checking us off as we passed. There was a lot of emphasis on safety and their recommendations on what to carry with you were very good. We then passed a second lift terminal and we were again checked in. Although there were several groups of skiers ahead of me, they stopped frequently to allow their slowest members to rest, and I was able to slip by. After passing the second checkpoint I moved slowly but steadily up to the ridgeline.

Then, after more tough slow climbing up onto the Long Trail, I came upon the same middle aged woman I had seen at the start. She was resting in the snow near her friend. Both looked quite tired. I did not think much about them until later when I realized those women had to have taken the second lift up the mountain, hiked a short distance on the trail, and were having difficulty at that point. At the trailhead and final lift checkpoint I reported the two women as not looking very well. I did not report my suspicions. Since the event is not competitive, the management will probably not make a big deal of it, but it was surely an example of poor sportsmanship!

While on the Long Trail I linked up with a fortyish couple from Gilford NH who were moving at about the same pace I was, and

we stayed together all the way to the finish. I had some difficulty getting up short steep grades of slippery snow - I am working on changes in equipment for next year. We then proceeded on a very tough 2 mile descent on an open ski trail with mogul bumps (Excuse my lack of proper ski terminology). It proved to very difficult to stay upright on snowshoes. We ended up skittering down many of the slopes on our butts (no damage to my ski pants!) and trying to watch for skiers descending from above. A queasy feeling. Finally we reached the bottom and hiked along a trail to the base camp. Another innovation was a large bell hung on a post at the finish. As you passed by, you were directed to take one pull on the bell rope, announcing to the event officials and skiers that a trekker had finished. Despite the fact that we were somewhat in the way of the downhill skiers, I found them polite and appreciative of what we were accomplishing. The event fee was \$15 and included a free lunch and a raffle of many nice ski and snowshoe items. Although the event had partial Tubbs sponsorship, I did not hear of any snowshoes being raffled off. I attempted to pick up lunch but the lunch room was so tightly packed with skiers that I gave up. In addition, the event finish time was hard to predict and was tentatively scheduled for 3 PM. The trek started at 10 AM, I was in by 12:30, but the raffle would not be until 3 PM. I gave it up and headed on home.

Finally, as a former road race events manager, I'm attuned to possible dangers on a course. I am concerned about skittering down the moguls slope, sometimes out of control, with skiers bearing down upon me. Despite the many safety procedures the area has in effect, I believe the entry form release statement would not protect the management if a skier or snowshoer were injured or killed under those circumstances. I think they need to temporarily close that ski trail, or develop a snowshoe trail parallel to the ski trail. A snowshoe trail would make the descent less difficult and more protective for snowshoers. I would even consider starting the snowshoers up the new trail so there was more interaction by skiers and snowshoers up on the ridgeline - another possible safety measure. Despite my stern observations, I feel it is a wonderful event and will go back. I am pondering the development of a similar mountain trek event here in New Hampshire.

Information for the Mad River event can be found from Sean Lawson, Naturalist Program Director - Mad River Glen Cooperative. He can be emailed at: sean@madriverglen.com

Happy Trails, Wayne Nicoll

Wayne made it down to his first WMAC Snowshoe Event at this season's Greylock Glen Race. I have corresponded with Wayne since 1997, the early days of our snowshoeing series. It was really great to have him come out to one of our events. Here is what he had to say about the Glen:

"It was a really nice experience for me - nice people, great venue, good weather, good food - a really nice event. I like your race format - great location, challenging but not too difficult course, no crummy trophies, good food, and so many nice people."

MOODY SPRINGS ROCKS! 2004

The holding of Moody Springs 2004 was in jeopardy right up until about Thursday before the race. However, it was "slightly" modified from the normal grueling nine miles to a gentle five miles. It was shortened because snow conditions were tough; with warm weather and rain the snow had turned in to a kind of mashed potato mush. It would have been extremely difficult to run for nine miles through this consistency, and, unfortunately, the shorter course deleted the passing of the famous Moody Spring. Therefore, I'm sorry, Farmer Ed, but with the lack of the Moody Spring cruise-by, this year's race cannot be referred to as Moody Springs, and I hereby deem it as Muddy Springs named for the condition of the parking lot.

The race started as usual up the steep road with racers having to navigate several ice flows. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile out where we normally turn right into single-track, we kept going on the road. All the people I normally "compete" with passed me on this section, especially once this road became a downhill. I just couldn't get my legs going with any speed. So I resigned myself to just having fun, and settled in at my own pace to enjoy the woods.

Eventually, after crossing a spot in the road with no snow covering, we turned in to a single-track, and the mushing was on. After a couple of minutes I recognized that we were on a trail that you end up on after the long winding climb out of Moody Spring. Knowing where I was and what was coming up, I picked up the pace down the hill leading into the Basin Brook gorge. I was having fun slipping and sliding at downhill warp speed.

On the final approach to the gorge I came up behind two of my competitors, Paul Hartwig and Will Danecki. I took the point and the three of us descended further into the gorge. After a few minutes we caught up with a confused Kaniac pacing back and forth looking for the trail at the edge of the brook. Being right-brained men, who can actually read a map, we saw the trail right away making a sharp left up a short steep hill. Kaniac started up it slipping briefly. I took the opportunity to knock her aside, jumping in front of her to get up the hill. Now we were on the glide path downhill through the gorge in the deep mushy snow.

Suddenly it hit me. My leisurely fun run through a snowy forest had turned in to "running scared" through a snowy forest. I found myself in front of my competition that I had assumed were all long gone. Crap! Now I felt a responsibility to actually race and compete rather than cruise having fun. Take the time to look at the beautiful Basin Brook running through the gorge? Heck no! That'll have to be for another day. I know what it looks like anyway. Concentrate on staying in the track, try to go fast, and stay ahead of those "friends."

I was going to have to hurt my lungs and legs and worry about getting caught on the steep climb out of the gorge. I was going to have to worry about getting caught on the final descent down the road with its ice flows like I did last year. The good news was that it wasn't a nine-mile race, so I arrived at the climb without the same leg weariness as usual. It was much easier going because of this. After the climb there is winding trail leading to the road, and on this I passed Konrad Karolzuk and

Jeff Clark, infamous snowshoe hikers and race-position tattletales.

Just before the road I came up about 30 yards behind Pete Lipka. Maybe I could make a run on him too. However, as he hit the road he was suddenly gone like the wind. I later found out that he was only wearing one snowshoe, as the binding wouldn't hold on the other, allowing him to go faster. I didn't look back until I got to downhill road, then took a quick glance over my shoulder. Nobody there yet! Get going! Some of those racers are known to be able to fly downhill, so I wasn't out of the woods yet. Would I cramp up on the hard ice? Would I fall down? Would I get caught? Would I die?

When I arrived at the finish line I stopped and stood there sucking wind. Old Farmer Ed, who was doing the finish, line said that I wasn't across the line yet, so I walked about ten feet further over to some weeds, coughed a few times, and promptly threw up. It wasn't a serious puke, just some watery yellow bile. In a minute my cohorts started arriving at the finish, and it started sprinkling rain.

Okay, now I had to get in the frame of mind to go get some of that breakfast that comes with the entry fee. As everyone else was doing, I unabashedly changed at my car, at one point only wearing a towel around my middle as if I just stepped out of the bath.

The long wait at Tom McCrumm's South Face Sugar Farm was worth it; I made an exception to my normal diet, eating eggs, but resisting the urge to eat sausage. Sitting around talking to friends was a great way to finish up the season. In one of my conversations I overheard the secret of being a competitive trail racer; it's chocolate Gu. So this season when you see me up there with Leigh Schmitt you will know that we are both high on chocolate Gu. See you next year everybody.

Bob Worsham (WorShamer)
bobworsham@charter.net

We had our 3rd Annual Northern Vermont Snowshoe Challenge 5K in delightful 28-degree weather. We had 50 participants, but were bucking heads with the Camp Saratoga event. I also had another snowshoe event enter the calendar, on the day of our event, in the very next town. I was not happy about that and suggested to the organizers that they might have checked out Vermont Sports to find a more open date.

Anyway, I'm seriously considering shifting my date for 2005 to Sunday February 13th, 2005. I am hoping that Dave Dunham and company might think about stopping off here on their way back to Massachusetts from Camp Saratoga Saturday.

I'd like to tap your wisdom regarding trying to make a better fit with the WMAC calendar. I know that in early and mid February there are a slug of fun events, snowshoe and otherwise, and one cannot de-conflict with everything.

*Thanks much
 Zeke Zucker*

FROM THE BARNYARD 2004

The DRAGON Award: Overall Male Champion for the 2004 season is **Ben Nephew**, with 585.64 points out of a possible 600. Ben improved each race and won his 1st Snowshoe Race at Covered Bridge this season, and additionally had one 2nd and three 3rd place placements this season. Ben also finished 11th at the USSSA National Championship 10km this year.

The LAUREL Award: Female Champion **Kelli Lusk** finished with 432.74 points to take top honors. This was done with only 5 finishes, which is pretty spectacular. Kelli set course records at the Glen, CRR, HKK, and won four of the five events she entered. She also ventured out to Nationals and was 5th!

Men's SOY (Snowshoer of the year): **Shaun Sutcliffe** finished the 2004 WMAC Season with 999.85 total points, best of anyone; and 4th overall with 564 out of his best six. Shaun won several age group titles through the season and supported the snowshoe series by attending each and every event.

Women's SOY: Sheryl Wheeler's two year reign at this spot ends and **Carol Kane** joins her as the only two time winner for the ladies. A very solid WMAC season followed by bringing home the Gold from Nationals, just a day after she and Laurel Shortell (tied for 2nd with last year's SOY co-winner Nikki Kimball) finished Moody and pancakes.

Men's ROY (Rookie of the year): **Jim Pawlicki** averaged almost 95% at his best six races, winning Merrimack and SPA Winterfest. Jim finished 3rd overall and did great at Nationals, in just his first season of snowshoeing.

Women's ROY: **Annie Schultz** finished her first WMAC Season on snowshoes with a 6th place overall finish despite missing everything from Covered Bridge on after breaking her ankle trailrunning on ice.

POY (Performance of year, Men): **Rich Bolt's** huge win at Northfield Mountain against the fastest/ deepest field of snowshoers ever assembled in New England (not my words but I believe them) blew away the competition in 2004.

POY (Performance of year, Women): **Nikki Kimball** taking the Gold Medal at Nationals according to our voters was top vote getter, and Nikki also took number two, with her performance at Camp Saratoga this season.

K2 Award: The most improved snowshoer for 2004 was **Mike Lahey**, who took Jack Casey to the final race before the 50+ division was decided. Mike had the 4th most total points for the season, in only his 2nd year on snowshoes.

The ERIN WORSHAM Award: "Most Lost" this season goes to the lead pack at Woodford.

HANNON Award: The **People You Should Know** articles pieced together from a variety of writers was the most popular writing in SnoNews.

BEVERLY Award: Awarded to the top snowshoer over age 60, **John Pelton** repeats with an age group title for our series, a co-directing job at our opening event Woodford, and a 2nd consecutive Gold Medal at the USSSA Championship.

SILVERBACK: Top snowshoer over age 70, this is **Richard Busa's** again. The "WWAH" is something special, he managed to do all 12 events.

CURLY: Volunteer of the year award. Thank you for the votes! **Young and Old Ed**, and **Paul and Judy Hartwig** share this one in 2004.

COMEBACK OF YEAR: **Peter Lipka** rebounds from a torn knee to become a force by the end of the season.

The STREAK: **Laurel Shortell** has finished three consecutive seasons worth of events; 27 is the current STREAK. This breaks **Konrad Karolczuk's** old mark of 22 straight.

RACE OF THE YEAR: **Covered Bridge** really was a great day on a great course under the mountain. It more than doubled any other event totals for folks favorite. We had several people voting for the events that almost didn't happen, **Moody** and **Moby** at North Pond. Thanks for that kindness!

COOKOUT OF THE YEAR: **Greylock Glen** in wicked cold barely outdid Covered Bridge for top feast.

BEST LOCATION: **Greylock Glen** narrowly finished ahead of last year's winner, Northfield Mtn. Having two events at the Glen seemed to have helped.

TOUGHEST RACE: **Curly's Record Run** had the additional benefit of -10 degrees to add to the difficulty in 2004. It took toughest race by a few votes over Northfield Mtn, which had an amazing group of athletes vying for positions.

TOUGHEST MILE: Just like last year, two climbs dominated the voting. **Curly's** managed the most votes (I have more trouble at Northfield) and Northfield was second. A surprise hard run for winning was the last section of Camp Saratoga, tying NFM in second.

FAVORITE SECTION OR MILE: The **Gould Trail** from Cheshire Harbor down to the Covered Bridge ran away with votes in this category. Not only were the pine incredible, but we ran along the brook too, and it was mostly downhill.

FASTEST: The entire **Saratoga Winterfest** course, aka SPA! This one wins again, and I don't see anything on the horizon challenging it in the future either.

SLOWEST: Voting was close in this one, but once everything was counted it was **Northfield Mtn** and it's famous single track wonder of a climb, including "the splitting of the rock:" just prior to the top.

SCENIC WONDERS: In no particular order: aside any of our streams, **View** at the top of CRR, people lining up at SPA, a full pot of chowder, the Kiln, Godmother Greylock, **Moody**, who's looking?, fun run to tannery falls, watching husband's butt, **Busa** with shirt off.

FROM THE BARNYARD 2004

WHAT SHOULD WE ADD: Team categories (already being worked on thanks to Dave Dunham), markers 1/2 m to finish, more chowder (will see what the SlugRunner can do), women with no tops (may distract too much from the racing), more chowder (shoot, again?), more raffles (sounds good, but we need sponsors?), Baystate Games (Dave Dunham is working on it), more jalepeno to the chowder (chowder is popular), races in Florida Mtn and Readsboro, Vt because the snow last longer up there (hummmm), dry deep snow at Moody (if we are lucky), mix up long and short events because running back to back long takes a toll (this could happen), relay races (Beth Herder has already started working on this for CRR). Change sign at HKK from "to finish" to "2 tough miles to finish" Finally, a call for Clydesdale and Shetland divisions (heaviest and lightest).

WHAT SHOULD WE DROP: Saratoga Biathlon did not go over well with anyone it appears. Sorry, from all of us. We also had two votes for dropping the tofu dogs. One clearly mentioned "dropping tofu dogs". The other was a little more subtle, voting best cookout as "any of them where the real hot dogs weren't fouled up by the decoys."

IMPROVEMENTS TO MAKE: We had request for more snow in eastern Mass, jersey barriers for wrong turns, markers that work in cold weather, more double headers, more indoor facilities, more trail markings, make applications one page on the web, more water stops on longer runs, fires are great but can we have them at all the events?

MISTAKES THAT NEED ATTENTION: Not many sent in, but Old Farmer Ed sent "none the last couple years, maybe we are saving them up for when we hoist Nationals so we can really screw up big time?" We also were sent - the markings at Woodford, aid stations mentioned on applications but none in the race (mostly due to extreme cold/ lack of volunteers, sorry)

WHAT WE REALLY DO WELL: Bring snowshoe adventures to us all!, Snoshu News, cookouts and quick results, post results and photos, serve great food in sub zero temps, being friendly, eating, race results, rapid updates of website, cookouts, gracious hospitality, setting up all that stuff to support hot food in really cold weather, make racing fun, make everyone feel very welcome, dion loaners are key.

FUNNIEST MOMENT (s): Frozen Faces at Curly's & "Curly" hair at Hawley; Warmdown at NFM; Peter Lipka winning pink pjs at Moby Dick Busa; All those who managed to finish in front of Bolt, Barrett, and Company at Woodford; Drive to Biathlon hitting the Squirrel and exchanging high fives, Rich Busa turning around on the trail at HKK seeing signs and ribbon but somehow thinking he was going the wrong way... and coming upon Art Gulliver who didn't say "WWAH"; Ed Jr trying his keys in all the silver vans at Winterfest; Ed Jr sitting at the gazebo with the short course win, smiling and watching all his friends go by; Rich Busa at Moby Dick not seeing his photo everywhere including on the shirts, Toy Mice in the tee shirts at Camp Saratoga courtesy of the Clark's kitten; Busa cracking his head on the ice trying to do the snow angel;

The Reference to the Peter Lipka hair care management system for men; Rich Busa recreating his finish at each event shirtless; Jim Schultz falling on his face in front of all at NFM.

OUT OF CATEGORY WRITE IN VOTES:

Hope the **SHIRTS FOR THE CHAMPS** go over well.

IMPRESSIVE STREAK by Laurel Shortell.

MOST DETERMINED – Laurel Shortell

BEST SPONSOR - Dion Snowshoes

BEST RD – All.

MEMORABLE MOMENT - frozen mustard at CRR

BEST TEAM - Jeff and K2

BEST SWEEPERS - Jeff and K2 and Miss Ellen

BEST WELCOMER – Swanee, Gotha Swan.

RD WHO LOST THE MOST sleep before a race (pray for a no melt day) – Ed @ Moody, Paul @ CB, Brad @ Moby.

BEST MARKED TRAIL, not even Rich got lost – SPA

MOST VERSITILE – Bob Dion

LOOKOUT NEXT YEAR – Jay Clark

BEST DRESSED – Rich Busa

ACADEMY AWARD - CRR video

IRONWOMEN OF THE YEAR - Carol and Laurel doing Moody - eating pancakes and doing Nationals.

TOP DOG - tippi.

And the final section from the Worsham's ballot:

Comeback of the Year - Worsham, to once again become Bob the Boles Killer by beating Dave by "point" whatever.

Race of the Year – Moody Spring modified was great.

Scenic Wonders - Annie Schultz stripped down to tight lycra.

Mistakes – The fact that Annie Shultz has a husband.

Things we Should Drop - Annie Shultz husband.

Best Muscle Tone - Kelli Lusk

Favorite Hug – Michelle Tetreault.

There goes another season, thanks for attending and thank you for the voting. We will be back in 2005 with plenty of fun and some great additions. Keep in touch this summer

F.Ed
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WMAC

2004 WMAC SNOWSHOE SERIES TOTAL POINTS

WMAC

12 POSSIBLE EVENTS TO SCORE AT / DECEMBER 28TH, 2003 – MARCH 14TH, 2004

1	Shaun Sutcliffe	46	MA	999.85	59	Richard Hunt	64	MA	214.97
2	Bob Dion	49	VT	842.88	60	Mike Hickey	46	MA	206.97
3	Edward Alibozek	41	CT	774.96	61	Nico Scibelli	41	MA	205.37
4	Mike Lahey	52	MA	741.21	62	Kelly Short	23	MA	199.99
5	James Pawlicki	29	MA	732.91	63	Tom Mack	39	NY	195.29
6	Christopher Lanaud	36	NY	686.45	64	Mike Cohen	25	NJ	188.31
7	Ben Nephew	28	MA	622.97	65	Marc Guillaume	31	MA	185.10
8	Ed Alibozek, Jr.	64	MA	618.99	66	Matt Wood	27	NY	184.64
9	Peter Lipka	52	MA	605.44	67	Todd Walker	37	MA	183.12
10	Dave Dunham	39	MA	592.50	68	Gary Cunningham	31	NY	182.60
11	Leigh Schmitt	31	MA	585.17	69	Nikki Kimball	32	NY	179.05
12	Jack Casey	50	MA	541.14	70	Jack Quinn	65	VT	178.57
13	Jay Kolodzinski	24	MA	525.08	71	Steve Peterson	37	MA	177.67
14	Elijah Barrett	27	NH	514.39	72	Jim Carlson	55	NY	172.91
15	Jim Schultz	41	MA	506.85	73	Justin McCarthy	14	MA	166.74
16	David Boles	57	NY	502.26	74	Nick Jubock	47	NY	166.35
17	Paul Hartwig	47	MA	498.58	75	Mike Buckley	43	NY	166.22
18	Larry Dragon	43	MA	497.88	76	Mark Burns	39	CT	164.93
19	Paul Low	30	MA	495.70	77	Erik Hanson	30	CT	162.50
20	Jacque Schiffer	39	NY	468.48	78	Michael McNeill	32	NY	161.62
21	John Pelton	64	VT	450.08	79	Jan Rancatti	43	VT	161.12
22	Kelli Lusk	33	MA	432.74	80	Gregory Rems	27	VT	160.63
23	Ed Saharczewski	50	MA	428.63	81	Ed Myers	52	PA	157.24
24	Bob Worsham	58	CT	422.51	82	Sue Joyner	45	MA	154.44
25	Gregory Hammett	26	NH	410.29	83	Dale Yarasavage	52	PA	153.20
26	Laura Clark	56	NY	410.05	84	Jesse Milonovich	30	NY	152.80
27	Kelly Herrington	29	NY	409.14	85	Frank Gaval	57	PA	152.02
28	Carol Kane	58	CT	408.27	86	Sally Goade	45	NY	147.58
29	Norm Hecker	43	NY	405.58	87	Steve Banatoski	40	MA	147.50
30	Scott Bradley	49	MA	400.93	88	Jerry Campbell	44	MA	146.21
31	Richard Bolt	33	NH	338.67	89	Rich Tanchyk	52	NY	142.96
32	Thomas Denny	44	MA	335.81	90	Brian McCarthy	42	MA	142.58
33	Scott Deslongchamps	34	CT	315.69	91	Craig Wilson	54	ME	138.21
34	Darlene McCarthy	41	MA	308.85	92	Rick Morse	53	NY	136.90
35	Bill Morse	52	MA	305.65	93	Debbie Livingston	29	CT	134.75
36	Jon Howes	47	CT	296.10	94	Richard Clark	49	MA	132.30
37	Jason Clark	32	NY	282.52	95	Bill Harper	56	NY	131.05
38	Rob Smith	36	MA	281.11	96	Jeff Coulter	39	NY	129.38
39	Matt Carter	28	MA	276.61	97	Tim Kruger	38	VT	128.54
40	Laurel Shortell	37	MA	272.30	98	Brad Herder	46	MA	127.09
41	Richard Busa	74	MA	271.25	99	Marcia Whitney	51	NY	125.99
42	John Ondendonk	36	NY	271.24	100	Steve Mitchell	62	NY	124.30
43	Annie Schultz	40	MA	268.46	101	Vincent Kirby	47	NY	121.32
44	Bonnie Fachini	39	MA	267.09	102	Eric Sanborn	40	NY	119.35
45	Stephanie Nephew	27	MA	263.46	103	Keith Decker	41	NY	118.33
46	Dan Verrington	41	MA	254.37	104	Bruce Groth	47	MA	117.62
47	Bob Irving	49	NY	254.05	105	Phil Borgese	44	NY	114.38
48	Wayne Stocker	49	MA	247.28	106	Raymond Chen	39	VT	113.25
49	Eric Bennett	35	NY	246.51	107	Maureen Roberts	46	NY	108.79
50	Patrick Riley	25	MA	243.94	108	Mark Syrett	55	MA	107.69
51	Tom Parent	27	RI	243.11	109	Julie Ryan	38	MA	107.65
52	Norm Sheppard	46	MA	237.26	110	Theresa Apple	42	MA	107.42
53	Bob Massaro	60	MA	235.82	111	Aurora Lamperetta	31	NY	107.30
54	Will Danecki	53	CT	231.52	112	Ellie George	48	NY	104.70
55	Larina Riley	25	MA	226.71	113	Lisa Mentzer	35	MA	103.26
56	Ken Deary	51	MA	216.83	114	Britt Brewer	40	MA	102.43
57	Janice Morra	45	NY	216.42	115	Martin Glendon	57	MA	101.06
58	Walter Kolodzinski	61	MA	215.40	116	Marc Lombard	39	MA	100.69

THE STREAK – 27 STRAIGHT

I don't believe any of us knew that in December of 2001 when Laurel Shortell showed up at the lead off event to the 2002 WMAC Snowshoe Series that we would be introduced to the most dedicated, determined snowshoer on our circuit.



It was at the 1st Mt Prospect / Woodford 10km on December 30th, 2001 that Laurel began snowshoeing our series. She has not missed an event since, 27 consecutive events. Laurel shows up in all sorts of weather and continually smiles, even when conditions are not optimum.

Who would have thought that a participant could go from being unknown by everyone to being the one person we all depend on to be there, week after week, all winter long? Laurel has become our light, our beacon. She has quietly exhibited kindness and angelic qualities often over the last three snowshoe seasons to many of us.

It seems strange that a woman who finishes in the bottom half of each race, who doesn't organize, direct, or write about any events, who doesn't appear to be super competitive, is among the most significant to our series.



Then again, considering the quirkiness of some of our events, I guess there isn't anything strange about an unassuming young lady being extraordinary.

Thank you Laurel, for gracing our events with your spirit and your love of the snowshoes. You find the best in everything, and we want to acknowledge it.

Top Photo is courtesy of Gary Bridgeman, NFM 2003.

Bottom Photo is courtesy of Farmer Ed, Saratoga Biathlon 2004.

Here are some "Hot Topics" that are in the developmental stage right now. Please let me know what you think of these items. I previewed most of these things with Dave Dunham (DD), and his thoughts are included

Covered Bridge: As I was on the second half of this course I had (what I thought was) a fantastic idea. Why have this event count as two distinct races (3.5 and 8.0) when we all start at the same time and pass by the gazebo either to continue or finish? Why not have everyone score points for the 3.5-mile opening "Hoxie/ Thunderbolt" section, and if you continue on for the second part, the "Covered Bridge" portion, you would score points again with your total time for the entire 8-miles? This would allow people who are limited with available weekends to get in two "scores" for our series at one race!

DD: "two races on the same day in the same race sounds good to me. A nice little way to bump up the scores. It certainly may bump up entrants in the race if someone has four finishes and wants to bag two at once to get their six finishes. Why not! Could make for some very interesting race tactics."

Relay/ Curly's: Beth Herder is interested in getting more High School Athletes and Families to CRR. She is thinking about a Relay Event that would take place after the 4-miler is over.

DD: "CRR is a short enough race that it would be possible to do. We would need to figure out what time would the relay be? I'd aim at keeping it short and allowing pick-up teams at the race (so you could do it if you didn't have 4 people show). Maybe a very short loop (500m?) done three times and then hand off. Could be exciting and fun to watch and cheer. I'm up for it."

Team Divisions: One thing we need to naturally progress towards is a "Team Category/ Competition". I know there is serious interest from the CMS Club, and the "Trail Troll" Dave Hannon.

DD: "Guidelines should be as simple as possible. Lets keep it small and easy. Three runners score and as many as you want can enter. A big club can enter different versions of its team (example: CMS could have a CMS/ Atlas and a CMS/ Readfeather, or a CMS/ MA and a CMS/ NH) all kinds of variations are allowed. You are only allowed to score for whatever team you put on your app that day (like I couldn't score for WMAC if I put down CMS, or I couldn't score for CMS/ Atlas if I put down CMS/ MA). Pick-up teams are allowed (so if you show up and only 2 WMAC people are present you could grab someone and form the "WMAC plus 1" team). There would be women's teams and age group teams and I'd say that women can score in the open team and age groupers can score down (Example: Busa runs for WMAC and scores in the 60+, 50+, 40+ and open team). I would be happy to keep track of the scoring at each race and overall, I love messing around with numbers. It would be strictly by place. This is the easiest way to track these things. I'd like to see all of the races used. It isn't much extra work for the RD, just include one more line on the results column that lists team and I can do the rest.

Ed

USSSA NATIONAL MEETING 03-06-04

Please note: This is not an official recording of the National meeting held at Squaw Creek. This is just my take on what happened at the National meeting. With more than 1/2 of the total membership present at the meeting it was nothing if not "lively". Any errors, omissions, opinions (except when attributed to any one individual) are mine and mine alone.

Mark Elmore opened the 4th annual members meeting by thanking all in attendance for making the trip to Squaw Creek CA. He noted that in the past the event was put on by the local organization and USSSA was available as "support". This year USSSA was responsible for the event.

Mark went over some event management notes. The race would be a mass start at 8:30 AM. There will be a water-stop at 4m. Awards will be given out at 11 AM. Results will be posted at the finish and posted to the web site as soon as possible. Awards will be given to the top 5 men and women in the 10k. The top 5 in each age group will be named All-American and the top 3 will receive medals.

Course markings were discussed. The RD used bamboo poles along with small flags and spray paint to mark the trail.

Mark opened discussion up to the floor with the qualifying procedures being the first issue discussed. Mark had received suggestions about not having a qualifier and perhaps having qualification based on an outstanding performance in other events. There was a suggestion to have "high caliber" athlete's auto-qualify. One suggestion was to have state championships where qualifiers would come from. Mark noted that the goal was to get more athletes to qualify and run at nationals. A suggestion was made to open the race up to all comers such as USATF does with road running nationals. Mark noted that membership was 250 and this year was down to 167 members. He also stated that what is offered to the membership is limited by what is available to give the athletes.

What people get for their money was discussed. It was noted that many people don't know about the sport, and even those who snowshoe do not know about USSSA. The question was raised "what is the purpose of USSSA" and how is it marketed. Mark stated that the National Program is run by a committee that doesn't do anything.

Mark then discussed how USSSA (Mark) is working with European snowshoe organizations. It appeared that most of the European snowshoe organizations were mostly concerned with the Eruo-cup. In order to become a demonstration sport in the Olympics, twenty countries would be needed; currently only 8-10 are established. Mark is working with the European groups to get inter-country competition going. Other countries have an advantage as many are federally funded.

Discussion then moved to the budget. Some felt that the budget needed to be increased and that spending should be done more carefully. A statement was made that the organization needs to be updated, and that people present were willing to do the work. Mark noted that a lot should fall to the regional reps. This led into a discussion about the incorporation of USSSA and how it is a privately owned entity that is not recognized as the National

Governing body. Candice Bosworth owns the USSSA and has allowed regional reps to do the work. A volunteer from the audience stated she would be willing to take on the task of marketing director.

After much debate, the consensus was that Mark should approach Candice and explain to her what took place at the meeting. The group decided that Candice should step down and a new board should be created. Barring this, the prevailing thought in the room was to form a new National body and start from scratch. Mark stated that he would talk to Candice and get back to the current regional reps by April 1st. The group decided that at that point nominations and voting would take place. A mission statement being created would follow that.

The next topic of discussion was how passing should be handled. Mark noted that you couldn't legislate good sportsmanship. It was generally agreed that if someone asked to pass the trail should be yielded. It also was noted that the passer should only ask to pass if they can maintain a faster pace.

Mark threw out some ideas for next year such as having additional events at the Nationals. Mark talked about the possibility of a relay or a longer race on the second day and the possibility of holding an open race along with the Nationals.

The meeting was closed with a speech by the coordinators of the Anchorage event. They talked about inexpensive flights to Alaska and how the 2005 event would be marketed better than any previous Nationals.

Dave Dunham

From one of the Anchorage, Alaska Coordinators -

Thanks for the recap. I could not make the meeting. Some thoughts on organizational changes:

On the subject of qualifying standards: We should follow USATF (they do not have qualifiers for trail championships) in making Nationals an all comers race especially if we now have to pay an entry fee to run the race.

All issues regarding the National series should be decided through voting by the regional representatives. Regional representatives should be chosen by members in their region by the process of nomination and election. References to Candice are disturbing. She appears to be uninvolved and has never addressed the members directly. As Mark has stated, the National competition program is run by the board of representatives, that is us. So lets start addressing issues and voting on them as a group. Anyone can request a vote; we can do it via email.

I have begun work on the racecourse for next year. What would you like? Lets vote? I propose 1/6 packed and groomed (start and finish area). 1/2 single track ungroomed but wide enough for passing. 1/6 unbroken but wide. 1/6 anything (variable). Elevation gain/loss min:600 and max 1200. All runnable, no sled hills etc.

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